1:Marshall E-5 (1952-1953) 1959 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

159 Band 2. She was /Nai's second cousin (MoFaBrSoDa) and the first cousin once
585 removed of the groom (MoSiDaDa). The attendants were not selected for their precise relationship to the bride. They were the only young kinswomen present in the two bands. The girls sat down and chatted with /Nai for a moment and then stood up and, giggling and chattering, took /Nai by the arms. /Nai drew back. Then Xama pulled /Nai's arms over her shoulders, bent and took /Nai on to her back so that her feet did not touch the ground. Xama carried /Nai in this position to the wedding scherm, laid her down inside, to the left of the opening as one entered, in the dark shadow, and covered her over with the kaross. There /Nai remained. We did not see her again that night.

It is the custom for the parents to take brands from their own fires to light the wedding fire of the bride and groom. Presumably this was done, though I did not see it. When the girls arrived the fire was burning and a young man, a cousin of the groom, was tending it. The two girls sat down by the fire on the women's side.

562 /Kung men and women must sit on opposite sides of the fire.[1] They believe that if
834 male and female genital organs should touch the same spot on the ground the man's
352 hunting powers would be vitiated and the woman would get a sickness in her genito-urinary tract, not an ordinary, human, communicable disease but a magical one. The woman's side is to the left as one faces the entrance to the scherm, the men's to the right. The fire is always in front of the entrance if the scherm is built, but, more often than not, if the weather is good, or the people are travelling and staying
[342] only one night, or the wife is lazy, she hangs the family belongings in a bush and does not build a scherm. Then it is the custom to thrust two upright sticks into the ground to represent the entrance, so that the family may orient itself.

159 In the werf of Band 2, about twenty or thirty yards to the west, a group of boys had
585 come to /Gunda to attend him. They were all the young boys of the werf who were approximately his age, two cousins (MoSiSo) and four of the sons of /Gunda's stepfather by his first wife. The boys made a show of catching /Gunda and held him by the arms for a moment, laughing and talking. Then they formed a line with /Gunda following at the end, walked to the wedding fire, and sat down on the men's

[1] This taboo reveals the association which, I
224 believe, the /Kung make between the hunting power
833 of men and the male sexual principle. Both must be protected, and sexual activity must be controlled and constrained lest the life-giving and food-producing force of men be weakened or drained away. During the period of a hunt a man must not have sexual intercourse—that is, while the man is looking for game and, after he has shot his little poisoned arrow into the animal, while he is tracking it for miles and waiting and watching for days till it dies of the poison. A hunt usually demands many days and nights of effort and privation.

● [783] Too frequent indulgence in sexual intercourse with one's wife, even when no hunt is in progress, is believed to diminish a man's hunting power. Some men believed that once in five nights was best; others
[841] thought once in three nights was all right. Men who have the joking relationship constantly play upon the theme of excess, taunting each other: 'You do not know hunting, you know women', 'You cannot leave your wife long enough to hunt.'

The /Kung are less strict about another taboo. A woman is supposed not to touch a man's hunting gear at any time, because this would lessen his power to hunt. But I have often seen women touch assegais and quivers. Indeed it has sometimes been urgently necessary to do so when the children got hold of them, as, for instance, when the three-year-old ≠Gao, agile as a flea, took after us with his father's assegai, infuriated with us for some sudden notion of his own. There is a medicine called *gow gowa*, made from a plant, which may be rubbed on the weapons to purify them if they are touched by women, but I never saw this done and doubted if anyone bothered with it. The effect of a woman's touching the hunting gear is much stronger if she is menstruating. I assume they are more careful then.

1:Marshall E-5 (1952-1953) 1959 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

587 589 [783] was meant. That would be very uncomfortable, he said. It would make her shiver and might make her sick. The rainy season's passing is what cleanses the woman. When she is about to go to her new husband she prepares herself by washing in the ordinary way.

Unless a woman is quite old she does not remain long unmarried. One man said, 'Even if a widow is thick and tall, but is a good woman, some man will want her.' Widows may marry as second wives of married men, or they may marry widowers, divorced men, or bachelors. The two young widows and the two divorced women who were unmarried in 1953, had remarried by 1955. Only the very old widows remain unmarried.

There are so few unmarried women that widowers have difficulty in finding wives. The young widowed musician, /Gao, was an example. After his first wife's death he had married the daughter of Gao, the medicine man in Band 1, when she was approximately ten or eleven years old, about the age of his own son, and was patiently waiting for her to grow up. Only one of the old widowers had succeeded in finding a wife by 1957.

736 768 [611] [604] The children of a widowed parent are kept by that parent. A widower may leave his children with a woman relative, but they remain his. Orphaned children go to live with relatives. There is a tendency to feel that the boys belong eventually to the father's side of the family, the girls to the mother's. This concept came to our attention several times, but we did not find it to be a rigid social rule. The relative who is expected to take the children if they are young is the MoSi. But the FaSi might be nearer or more able for one reason or another to take them and might do so. FaBr would be the relative most likely to take half-grown boys, but again MoBr might be the one. Failing these, some other relative would take them. When it came to arranging marriages for orphaned children, informants said that the father's elder brother would have the most authority; a stepfather or stepmother has none.

[584] [597] Adoption does not exist in /Kung society.

586 Divorce may terminate a marriage. The couple may divorce without formality, by mutual consent or by one spouse simply leaving the other. The /Kung word for ending a marriage in this way is */kao joo*. I use the word 'divorce' for convenience, although no legal action takes place. No religious dispensation is involved, no permission or action on the part of the headman or group is required. If parents of a very young couple withheld consent this might influence the couple, but the parents' consent is not a requirement. No property entanglements present difficulties, for there is no dowry or bride-price to be resolved. The only property a /Kung owns personally consists of movables, and these are never owned in common by man and wife. Every artifact down to a single bead belongs to an individual, who takes his property with him in case of divorce. [422]

Divorce does not change people's status in the community in any way. They are free to remarry without restrictions.

Divorce is never obligatory and the grounds are not formalized; the desire of the couple concerned is the determining factor. A condition such as sterility, for example, or a wrongdoing such as adultery, might or might not lead to divorce, depending on how the couple felt about it. Mistreatment or failure to provide would certainly be considered justification for divorce, should they ever occur, but justifica-

9: Thomas T-5 (1951-1955)1959
FX10 Bushmen FX10
GiKwe

774 troubling the people by their constant presence and by their
756 deafening roars at night. The man's spirit spoke with the
535 lions, defied them, and ordered them away, and the lions did go; they troubled the people no longer.

786 When the spirit returns, the medicine man comes to him-
756 self, as Gai did presently. He stood up and ran into the veld,
535 gaining speed as he went. Far out in the veld he screamed, a shriek of definace, then turned and charged back toward the dance fire. He passed through the dance like a wind through dry leaves; the people ducked aside and shrank away from his feet, then settled together when he had gone by. Gai shrieked again, turned himself, and rushed back, charging bull-like toward the fire again; this time Ukwane seized his arms and though Gai plowed forward, Ukwane hung on, dragging behind with all his weight, until at last Gai fell headlong into the dance fire and his hair burst into flames.

Ukwane snatched him out and slapped out the fire in his hair, and Gai, his mouth open and his eyes quite wild, sparks still falling from his head like stars, strained against Ukwane's hands. At last he broke away.

786 In a moment he bent slowly over the fire and washed his
756 hands in the flames, then went to one of the women in the
535 circle of singers and, placing one hand on her chest, the other
783 on her back, shuddered and groaned as he sucked the evil from her, then straightened suddenly and shrieked the evil into the air. In this way Gai cured all the people, followed as he went by Ukwane, who now held Gai's arm to keep him upright. Before long, Gai had fallen again exhausted and was dragged by the ankles to a place in the shade.

786 I looked at him and saw that his eyes were closed, his eye-
756 lids puffed, and thought he seemed unconscious. His breath
535 came rasping through his mouth and nose, and his pulse, showing in "the heart's place," seemed very quick. But he

13: Marshall E-5 (1952-1955) 1962 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

Good and evil are thus explained by a duality which has its principal source in the omnipotent ≠*Gao/na*'s own self-oriented nature. The scope of this duality is enlarged by the similar duality in the natures of *//Gauwa* and the *//gauwasi*, who sometimes do good deeds to man and sometimes bad, when they are doing the work commanded by their master, and, also, when they instigate actions on their own initiative, as they sometimes do, especially I gather when ≠*Gao/na* is not around, for he is omnipotent but not omniscient or omnipresent.

Evil is sometimes accounted for by the gods working at cross purposes among themselves. For instance, *//Gauwa* might lead a man to find honey which ≠*Gao/na* had intended for someone else whom he wished to favour. ≠*Gao/na* would be angry and take revenge upon the man who found the honey. But, on the other hand, the gods may talk things over and agree together and man may benefit. The *//gauwasi* might want to take a person in death. One god would say, 'Go ahead', but the other says, 'No, let us not take him.' The first then agrees and the person is left. That is how people may be very ill and still be cured.

Punishment

The concept of sin as an offence against the gods is vague among the /Kung. Man's wrong-doing against man is not left to ≠*Gao/na*'s punishment nor is it considered to be his concern. Man corrects or avenges such wrong-doings himself in his social context. ≠*Gao/na* punishes people for his own reasons, which are sometimes quite obscure. It was interesting to see in the examples given how often food was involved.

Burning bees, I learned, displeases ≠*Gao/na* intensely. He likes the bees, his wife is the 'mother of the bees', and he is very fond of honey himself. On one occasion, two men found honey in a tree. They tried to chop it out but the bees stung them so badly that they built a fire to drive them away and many bees were burned. ≠*Gao/na* did not like this. He sent a sickness upon the men and both died. When a person has burned bees, his body becomes hot as though burned by fire and he dies.

≠*Gao/na* might change himself into a gemsbok and be walking in the veld. A hunter might come along and kill that gemsbok, thinking how lucky he was to get it. He would take the meat home and eat it and the next day he would be dead. Others who had no part in the killing would not die. ≠Toma who was telling this went on to say that ≠*Gao/na* might regret having done such a thing—killing a man who was just hunting to feed his children instead of helping him—and, to make amends, he might particularly favour that man's son.

If ≠*Gao/na* really sets out to kill someone in punishment, ≠Toma told us, one method he uses is to convert himself into honey and place himself in a tree like an ordinary honeycomb. Then he directs the person he wants to kill to that tree. The person takes the honey home, eats it, and then dies.

≠Toma added that ≠*Gao/na* might punish a person just a little by giving him a mild sickness, which would be comparable to giving him a thrashing. A good person who had done no wrong at all might also be punished by a mild sickness. ≠*Gao/na*'s motive, ≠Toma explained, might be to 'test' him or to 'break' him. (Ledimo and I worked carefully over this translation. We think we have the correct idea.) Why? we asked, but ≠Toma could not say. Not man's due, but whim and pride